

REMARKS

The application has been amended to place the application in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Claims 2, 4-8 and 16-20 were previously pending in the application. Claims 5, 19, and 20 are cancelled and new claims 21-23 are added. Therefore, claims 2, 4, 6-8, 16-18 and 21-23 are presented for consideration.

Claims 2, 4-8 and 16-17 are rejected as unpatentable over TSUDA et al. 5,936,688 in view of NAKAI 6,219,119. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 17 is amended to emphasize that the closed geometric shapes (of the depressed areas) are as seen in plan view. Claim 17 is further amended to recite that each of the protrusions has a width **W** and a height **D**, where the width **W** and the height **D** have a relationship of $0.5 \leq (D/W) \leq 1.0$.

The position set forth in the Official Action is that TSUDA et al. do not teach or suggest that the depressed areas having a closed geometric shape and are isolated from others of the depressed areas as recited in claim 17.

Figures 5 and 8 of NAKAI are offered in an attempt to overcome the shortcomings of TSUDA. However, NAKAI do not teach that for which it is offered.

Figures 5 and 8 of NAKAI are cross-sectional views showing protrusions 3 and depressions 4. Figure 5 shows a cross-

sectional view with layer 1 that extends over protrusions 3 interconnected, so that in cross-section, there may appear to be a closed shape. However, neither Figure 5 nor any other figure of NAKAI teaches a closed geometric shape as seen in plan view.

By way of further explanation, each of the recited depressed areas is similar to the dimples on the surface of a golf ball. Each dimple of a golf ball is isolated from other dimples on the golf ball, by raised areas (interconnected protrusions). Neither NAKAI nor TSUDA teach or suggest this feature. And thus, this would not have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art.

Moreover, the protrusions in NAKAI are element 3. These elements do not meet the limitation that each of the protrusions has a width **W** and a height **D**, where the width **W** and the height **D** have a relationship of $0.5 \leq (D/W) \leq 1.0$.

Claims 6 and 7 are written in independent form and include limitations similar to claim 17. The analysis above regarding claim 17 is equally applicable to claims 6 and 7.

New claims 21-23 further define the protrusions of claim 17 and are also believed patentable over the cited prior art.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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